

BEDFORD ARCHITECTURAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—Earl de Grey presided at the first annual meeting of this society, held last week. A report from the council having been presented, papers were read "On Architecture," by Mr. G. R. French; "On the Ecclesiastical Architecture of Bedfordshire," by the Rev. W. Airey; "On Archaeology," by Mr. Inskip; "On the Seals of Bedfordshire," by the Rev. H. J. Rose. The president, in the course of some observations which he addressed to the meeting, referred to restorations and improvements which had been made in the county, particularly at Cockayne Hatley, Cranfield, Warden, Eyeworth, Ampthill, Stevenage; St. Mary, St. Peter, and St. Cuthbert, in Bedford; Aspley, Pavenham, Halcote, Podenton, Harrold, Tingrith, and some others. It was gratifying to learn that extensive works would be carried into effect this year at Felmersham, Stagsden, Clophill, Potton, and upon that beautiful relic of antiquity, the priory church of Dunstable. A letter was read from Mr. W. P. Griffith, suggesting, amongst other things, that "attention should be directed principally to such examples of church architecture as are good and pure, in preference to those which are merely surprising or curious. The latter are more fitted for the antiquary; we must treat our old churches like the bees do the flowers, cull only the sweet or the good." If we can find space we may hereafter give extracts from some of the papers.

THE WESTERN LITERARY INSTITUTION, under the new management, is going on very spiritedly. The appropriation of one evening in the week to the consideration of scientific subjects of the day is a good arrangement.

SMOKY CHIMNEYS.—Sir: The attention of builders has frequently been called to one of the great drawbacks to domestic comfort, viz.: a flue which refuses to convey the smoke. Your correspondent, W. Rowe, like many others whose prescriptions I have read, seems to consider he has discovered a universal remedy. I would not undervalue his opinion on one point; on the contrary, every one must agree with him that the draft to the fire must be powerful to cure obstinate smoky chimneys. But I deny the soundness of the principle laid down for cure if applied as a universal maxim. I believe the causes of this crying evil are numerous; and, in order to cope with them, a knowledge of pneumatics as applied to mechanics is requisite. Among other strange things, I remember reading an odd principle laid down by a writer who dilated on the merit of a "mail guard's horn" as a model for the construction of flues, and strongly advises the small end being placed downwards. I need not point out the absurdity of the proposition,* as every one will perceive the smaller the column of rarified air the greater will be the pressure as it ascends, in consequence of its spreading to a broader surface of condensed air. I have stated that I believe the causes of smoky chimneys are various. Take, for example, the position of doors, especially when there are more than one in a room. Again: in a mansion there are offices attached, the chimney-shafts of which are considerably below those of the mansion, the westerly winds prevail, and you have smoky chimneys; and, in some cases, the flues are twisted about in all directions, rendering it quite impossible to clean them with a machine, and often perilous for the poor boy who attempts to climb them, and thus they remain imperfectly cleaned, so that there is scarcely a passage left for the smoke:—in this latter case, your correspondent's tube would be impracticable. Mr. Nicholson recommends a plan which I think preferable, which he describes in his "Practical Builder;" it consists of a funnel, fixed to the coverings, inclining to the size of a pipe, made in short lengths, to fix on the top, for several feet up the flue. The iron being a rapid conductor, the air is speedily rarified, and a space being left round the pipe gives room for the downward current, without arresting the progress of the smoke. Believing the mode adopted by your correspondent in agitating the subject through the medium of your valuable publication the best course, I have ventured to follow in his track.

THOMAS THOM.

* The absurdity of this is not so certain as our correspondent thinks.

PROJECTED WORKS, &c.—Advertisements have been issued for tenders, by 7th inst., for the external restoration of Ware Church, Herts; for the erection of a church and parsonage-house at Prestwood, Bucks; the erection of a Union-house for 600 inmates at Aylsham; the erection, &c., of the York new Workhouse;—by 20th, for the rebuilding of the parish church at Rochford, Carlisle; by 10th, for the erection of a new military prison at Forton, Gosport; by 3rd, for alterations and additions at the Bedford County Prison; by 6th, for altering and enlarging the Union Workhouse at Thornbury; by 3rd, for the erection of two additional wards to the Romford Union Infirmary; by 3rd, for the works of the City of London Union Workhouse (enlargement of time); by 15th, for the erection of a Farm-house and buildings, at Thorverton, Devon; by 20th, for the construction of Sewers in the Southampton Marsh, and for making new roads thereon; by 10th, for paving and repairing the carriage-way pavements in the Whitechapel district; and by 7th, for maintaining and keeping in repair part of the turnpike-road between Melton Mowbray and Grantham.

FILE MAKING BY MACHINERY.—In the town of Birmingham, Connecticut, an invention has been perfected for cutting files by machinery, which, it is said, if not brought to England, will make files an article of import. In England files are cut with a hammer and chisel, producing from one to a dozen files per day. A contemporary thus describes the new machine:—It is about 5 feet long, 2 feet wide, and 3 feet high, and can be worked as easily as the turning of a common grindstone. The blank intended to be made is placed in a central position, the chisel strikes both sides of the blank at the same time, making, in common speed, between 200 and 300 cuts per minute. The gearing is so adjusted that the chisels accommodate themselves to the thickness of the file, so that the cut is equal in depth throughout; and the regular progression of the file ensures perfect regularity in the distance of the cuts. A 10-inch file, of medium fineness, is cut on both sides in three minutes; in three minutes more the traverse cuts are made, and it is again passed through to cut the sides. Thus, three machines, which will not cost more than 300 dollars each, and can be tended by one man, can complete twenty common files in an hour, or 200 in a day. A steam-engine of 5-horse power can put fifty of these machines in operation.

RATING OF TENEMENTS.—The first clause of the Bill brought into the House of Commons by Mr. P. Scrope, having for its object the exemption of occupiers of small tenements from the payment of Poor and Highway rates, enacts—"That from and after the 25th March, 1848, no occupier of any tenement of which the net annual value shall not exceed 10*l.* in any city or town which contains a population of 50,000 inhabitants, or 8*l.* in any town which contains between 10,000 and 50,000 inhabitants, or 5*l.* in any other parish, shall be liable to be assessed for the relief of the poor, or for the repair of the highways. Provided that in case the medical officer of the union shall certify, in writing, that any such tenement, for want of proper drainage or ventilation, is in such a state as to be prejudicial to the health of the inmates, or of persons residing in the neighbourhood, it shall be lawful for the authorities to give directions to the overseers, churchwardens, or other officers, by whom the rate of the parish or place in which such tenement shall be situated, is made or assessed, to assess and levy the rates on the occupier of such tenement, the same as if this Act were not in existence." By the second clause it is provided—"That this Act shall not apply to, or be in force in any city, town, or parish in which, by any local Act, the rates for the relief of the poor, or the repair of the highways, are or may be levied from the owners of tenements under 6*l.*"

SCENERY AT THE LYCEUM.—Mr. Beverley has produced two excellent scenes for "The Happy Family," now playing at the Lyceum; "A Dilapidated Inn-yard," and a "Waterside Villa." The latter especially is one of the most perfect transcripts of the hundred and one cockney boxes scattered along our rivers' sides, with no features but comfort and a smart veranda, that can be conceived.

THE CAMBRIDGE ARCHITECTURAL SOCIETY.—On the 17th ult., a meeting of the Cambridge Architectural Society was held at the Society's Rooms, when the rev. the President, gave a description of the church of St. Mary at Jerusalem, built by the Emperor Justinian, circa A.D. 535, but now a mosque called Al-Aksa.* It stands southward of the area once occupied by the Jewish Temple, where now is the well-known Saracenic Building—the Mosque of Omar, or "Dome of the Rock." Vast substructions were made to raise its foundations level with this area, and the church itself—a nave with aisles and transepts—was of vast dimensions, dazzling glory, and costly adornment. Theodore, a distinguished architect, had the honour of its erection; and Barachus, a bishop of Bacthi, was overseer of the work. When Jerusalem was taken by the Saracens, under Omar, St. Mary's was converted into a Mosque, and held by them in only less reverence than the "Dome of the Rock." Between 775 and 785 Al-Mahadi almost rebuilt it, altering its character materially; he reduced its length, and increased its width by adding two aisles on either side. Jerusalem was recaptured by the Crusaders A.D. 1099, and in 1119 Baldwin I., the king, gave the church, under the name of the Palace or Temple of Solomon, to "the poor fellow-soldiers of Jesus Christ," a voluntary association of noble knights for the protection of christian pilgrims, and the original of the illustrious order of the Templars, who indeed derived their latter name from this venerable building. Saladin again took the city in 1187, and the church of St. Mary once more passed to the Moslems by whom it is still retained; it nevertheless to this day exhibits, externally, a christian character, having a long, high-pitched roof, and a clerestory, aisles, and transepts, all sufficiently well defined. Its length is 260 feet, and width 180. Beneath is a double-vaulted passage, part of the substructions before-mentioned.

THE SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS will open their exhibition to the public on Monday next. It will be found above the average degree of merit. We hear good things of a large landscape by Mr. Pyne, especially as to the middle distance; a picture by Mr. Anthony in his peculiar style, and a capital bit of painting by Mr. Windus;—that Mr. Wilson, jun., has a beautiful "Avenue," and that some heads, by Mr. Baxter, excel in colour and feeling. A charming little picture, by Mr. Marshall, "The Coming Footstep," is also praised.

THE WELL-KNOWN WELL AT ANTWERP, placed in the open space opposite the Cathedral, as seen in Hollar's engraving, has been perfectly repaired, and the missing parts restored, agreeably to the original design. The base, on which this singular iron canopy now stands, is a new construction, square in form, and of stone; the upper part is pierced with quatrefoils, and harmonises perfectly with the trefoiled arches of the iron-work, which unite at the apex, and are surmounted, as all antiquaries know, with a small statue of the Thundering Jupiter. It is a monument of undoubted antiquity, and a beautiful example of the handicraft in metal which distinguished the mediæval era, always attributed to the hammer and chisel of the famous blacksmith of Antwerp, Quintin Matsys. Whether his work, or not, is at least unrecorded by any written document, but tradition has always so described it.—*Art-Union Journal.*

MODERN FRENCH ART IN THE LOUVRE.—As might be expected, the result of giving a place to every picture went (an experiment determined on to meet the extraordinary circumstances of the time) is very unsatisfactory. The exhibition contains no less than 5,180 works, thus divided, according to the *Literary Gazette*:—

Painting	4,599 Nos.
Sculpture	335
Architecture	39
Engraving	144
And lithography	64

Some letters received by us from French artists speak most despondingly of their prospects. For a time, at all events, there will be little inclination or ability to spend money on works of fine-art.

* Mr. Fergusson in his interesting volume "On the ancient Topography of Jerusalem," denies that the Aksa is Justinian's Church, and gives reason for his opinion.—Ed.